

## ***Communication Skills for Law Enforcement Officers***

BLET: 06G

TITLE: COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

Lesson Purpose: To provide the basic law enforcement student with basic verbal/nonverbal strategies to more effectively communicate with others.

Training Objectives: At the end of this block of instruction, the student will be able to achieve the following objectives with information received during the instructional period:

1. Speak plainly using clear diction and grammar.
2. Utilize voice commands to project control and direct actions.
3. Demonstrate and identify common body language signals.
4. Describe what role body language, posture, and demeanor play in the escalating and deescalating of emotionally charged situations.
5. List three strategies to enhance a person's active listening skills.
6. Demonstrate "active" listening skills.
7. List four key principles of effective communication used when dealing with people who have culturally different backgrounds.
8. List four methods of interaction officers can utilize with people of culturally different backgrounds.
9. List three ways being culturally aware can assist officers in improving officer survival and safety concerns.

Hours: Eight (8)

Instructional Method: Conference/Practical Exercise

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### Required Equipment and Training Aids:

Audio-visual classroom equipment  
Video recording equipment or audio tape recorder  
Video:  
*Communication Skills for Law Enforcement  
Officers*, NCJA (1997)

### References:

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Giles, Howard; Fortman, Jennifer; Dailey, Rene; Barker, Valerie; Hajek, Christopher; and Anderson, Michelle Chernikoff. "Communication Accommodation: Law Enforcement and the Public." Santa Barbara, Calif.: Center on Police Practices and Community, University of California, 2005. [On-line]. Available

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at: [http://repositories.cdlib.org/isber/coppac/articles\\_chapters/ICAtoppaper](http://repositories.cdlib.org/isber/coppac/articles_chapters/ICAtoppaper).

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"When Looks Kill: Profiling the Domestic Assaulter." Video: AIMS Media, 1992.

Prepared By:

Peggy M. Schaefer  
Instructor/Coordinator  
North Carolina Justice Academy

## ***Communication Skills for Law Enforcement Officers***

Officer Pat Tynan  
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

Sgt. Marc Deluca  
Charlotte/Mecklenburg Police Department

Date Prepared: August 1997

Date Revised: August 1998

Reviewed By: Kathy Moore  
Agency Legal Specialist  
North Carolina Justice Academy

Date Reviewed: December 1998  
January 2000  
November 2000  
October 2001

Revised By: George Ferguson  
School Director  
Rockingham Community College

Jon Blum  
Instructor/Coordinator  
North Carolina Justice Academy

Date Revised: November 2001

Revised By: Robert B. Yow  
BLET Curriculum Coordinator  
North Carolina Justice Academy

Date Revised: January 2006  
July 2007  
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Revised By: Robert B. Yow

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Revised By: BLET Revision Committee

Date Revised: July 2011

## ***Communication Skills for Law Enforcement Officers***

Revised By: Jennifer H. B. Fisher  
BLET Curriculum Coordinator/Instructor  
North Carolina Justice Academy

Date Revised: July 2013

Reviewed By: Timothy L. Fuss  
DOCC Curriculum Coordinator/Instructor  
North Carolina Justice Academy

Date Reviewed: January 2014

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### **TITLE: COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS - Instructor Notes**

1. This lesson plan must be presented by an instructor currently certified by the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission as a General Instructor.
2. There are a large number of practical exercises within this lesson. Instructors need to possess excellent communication and facilitation skills in order to teach the block and properly facilitate the exercises.
3. The videotaping of all BLET practical exercises enhances their use. Videotaping should especially occur in this block to properly facilitate the learning.
4. Conducting the practical exercises:
  - a) Practical Exercise #1, “Using Emphasis in Sentence Structure.”
    - (1) This exercise is designed to help students use the appropriate word emphasis in sentence structures.
    - (2) Pass out the handout to all students.
    - (3) Have students read the top segment to themselves and practice changing the word emphasis.
    - (4) Select individual students to read parts of the second segment aloud to the class.
    - (5) Discuss the differences and reinforce the changes in meaning.
  - b) Practical Exercise #2, “Using Variety in Sentence Structure.”
    - (1) This exercise is designed to help students use a variety of pitch, volume, and expression in sentence structures.
    - (2) Have one student read the first passage aloud with no expression. Record the reading and play it back for the students to hear.
    - (3) Have another student read the second passage using a variety of pitch, volume, and pauses. Record the reading and play it back for the students to hear.

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- (4) The word “caprice” means a sudden and impulsive change of mind. The word “contrived” means showing the effects of planning or devising.
- c) Practical Exercise #3, “Testing for Nasal Twang.”
  - (1) Have the students hold their own noses and say, “ee-ah-oo” (sounds like the words from the “farmer and the dale”).
  - (2) Their noses should not vibrate. If their noses do vibrate, then they have some nasality.
  - (3) The only sounds in the English language that should be nasal are m, n, and ng.
- d) Practical Exercise #4, “Do You Articulate or Mumble?”
  - (1) Have the students read the attached verses, emphasizing the consonants and good diction.
  - (2) Record a student reciting them and play it back for emphasis.
  - (3) The student(s) should be surprised that what felt like an over-exaggeration of consonants comes through on the tape as good clear articulation.
- e) Practical Exercise #5, “Directing Others.”
  - (1) Have the students read the attached phrases, emphasizing strong voice projection.
  - (2) Pay particular attention to students who might use a rising inflection.
  - (3) Record some of the students giving strong, assertive commands.
- f) Practical Exercise #6, “Attitudes and Nonverbal Communications.”
  - (1) Divide class into groups of four.
  - (2) Write the following attitudes and situations on index cards to distribute for the exercise:
    - a) Attitudes

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- (1) Happy-go-lucky
  - (2) Depressed
  - (3) Angry
  - (4) Superior, larger than life ego
- b) Situations
- (1) Group discussion on their long term professional goals.
  - (2) Group discussion on their own personal financial situation.
  - (3) Group discussion on their relationship with their parents/family.
  - (4) Group discussion on their personal motor vehicles.
  - (5) Group discussion on the last meal they ate.
- (3) Assign each person a particular attitude to assume throughout the exercise; ask them to convey the attitude *nonverbally*. They should not tell the other members of the group what their “attitudes” are.
- (4) At the end of the exercise, each person in the group should attempt to decide which person was assigned what attitude.
- (5) Then discuss the accuracy of the predictions.
- g) Practical Exercise #7, “Which Is Which?”
- (1) Pass out the appropriate handout to each student.
  - (2) Give them several minutes to indicate their choices.
  - (3) Then discuss the correct answers.
- h) Practical Exercise #8, “Nonassertive, Assertive or Aggressive?”
- (1) Pass out the appropriate handout to each student.



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- (2) Give them several minutes to indicate their choices.
- (3) Then discuss and demonstrate the correct answers.
- i) Practical Exercise #9, “SPEAR.”
  - (1) Ask students to choose a partner for this activity. One student should be A and the other should be B.
  - (2) Ask students to stand and face their partner.
  - (3) In a timed one (1) minute conversation, the A student should practice SPEAR - Stance, open posture, maintain good eye contact, attending behavior, and relax. The B student should do anything BUT SPEAR, i.e., stand very close to the other student, maintain a closed posture, avoid eye contact, ignore the other student’s presence, and don’t relax.
  - (4) After one minute, A and B should exchange roles for another one minute conversation.
  - (5) Then, for the third exercise, both A and B should practice SPEAR simultaneously.
  - (6) At the end of the exercise, ask the entire class the following questions. Write their comments on a flip chart.
    - (a) What do you think and feel when the other person is practicing poor communication skills and does **NOT** use **SPEAR**?
    - (b) What do you think and feel when the other person **IS** using the **SPEAR** skills?
    - (c) How can you use these skills as a new law enforcement officer? With citizens? With fellow officers? With supervisors? What do you think will be the results of using **SPEAR**? What may happen to officers who do not use **SPEAR**?
- j) Practical Exercise #10, “Proper Paraphrasing.”
  - (1) Instructor should split the class into groups of three.

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- (2) Person **A** will say about two or three paragraphs to person **B** who will then paraphrase what person **A** said.
  - (3) Person **C** will observe only and will offer comments on how person **B** did with his paraphrasing. Person **C** should make sure person **B** follows the procedures listed in the outline.
  - (4) Each person in the group should have the opportunity to participate in each role identified.
  - (5) Possible topic areas can be:
    - (a) Relate an interesting vacation story
    - (b) Talk about what you did this past week at work
    - (c) A frustrating incident at a store or other location
    - (d) The last time you got angry at work
  - (6) Each individual in the group should get the opportunity to be Person A, B and C.
- k) Practical Exercise #11, "Recognizing Your Own Stereotypes."
- (1) Pass out handout and have students briefly make comments. Assure anonymity by not collecting the responses.
  - (2) Engage in group discussion asking the following questions:
    - (a) How many negative versus positive stereotypes?
    - (b) How might these stereotypes affect your interactions with different groups?
    - (c) Were some groups harder to stereotype than others?
    - (d) What are some stereotypes that are important for officer survival reasons?
    - (e) What are some stereotypes that officers carry around that potentially have a negative impact?

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- (f) What are some of the stereotypes that the public carries around about officers that potentially have a negative impact?
- 5. To promote and facilitate law enforcement professionalism, three (3) ethical dilemmas are listed below for classroom discussion. At their discretion, instructors must provide students with each ethical dilemma listed below. Sometime during the lecture instructors should “set the stage” for the dilemma prior to taking a break. Instructors are encouraged to develop additional dilemmas as needed.
  - a) You are on a DWI Checking Station when you here a fellow officer say: “Hey Bozo, move your \*&^%%! car off my %\$^^&% highway!” What will your response be?
  - b) Upon initial contact with a citizen, an officer is met with an aggressive attitude. The officer responds by mirroring the behavior to show he will not be intimidated and telling the person, “Calm down or you’re going to jail!” What should be done?
  - c) In many cultures, “saving face” is of vital importance and could open or close communication from the outset. Your partner immediately intimidates the person to keep control of the situation. What will you do?

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### I. Introduction

**NOTE: Show slide, “Communication Skills for Law Enforcement Officers.”**

#### A. Opening Statement

“As officers you will be constantly required to interact with people in order to get things done. Unless you can communicate in such a way that people will understand and respond to you, your road will be a rough one. Communication is an officer’s prime tool with which he can guide, organize, motivate, change, and also effectively understand what another person really wants.

When we think of communication, most of us think almost at once of words or talk. Communication is much more than mere words; we must remember that words are no more than symbols which make possible the transmission of meanings. Communication is a function of common meanings, the overlapping of the perceptual fields of the communicator and communicatee.

The way in which you communicate with others has a direct effect on the way in which they respond to you. Good communication skills can often prevent a potentially explosive situation. ‘Reading’ people involves observing their behavior, being aware of their tone of voice, and actively listening to their words. You must ‘tune into’ the people around you.”<sup>1</sup>

#### B. Training Objectives

**NOTE: Show slides, “Training Objectives.”**

#### C. Reasons

“To be effective, officers must utilize communication skills that involve hearing verbal messages, perceiving nonverbal messages, and responding verbally and nonverbally to heard and *perceived* messages. To ensure that these communication skills become an integral part of your techniques as an officer, you must practice them frequently.”<sup>2</sup> There will be numerous opportunities for you to practice these techniques as you complete your basic training experience. You will be interacting with other students, instructors, officers from differing agencies, role players, and other citizens. Take advantage of these opportunities to work on more effective communication skills.

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Being able to communicate and diffuse potentially explosive situations may be a major life saving strategy for you. Many police personnel can speak of events when their “gift of gab” kept them out of a physical confrontation with a highly charged individual. Being able to talk on different levels with the variety of people you will encounter in your “routine” working day will be paramount to your success in this profession.

**NOTE: Show slide, “Diffusing a Situation,” and tell a personal story of diffusing a situation.**

**NOTE: Show video, *Communication Skills for LEOs* - “Vehicle Stop Re-enactment” (7 minutes). Ask students how they believed the trooper behaved, both verbally and nonverbally. Write and discuss their answers on the flip chart.**

### **II. Body**

#### **A. General Speaking Strategies**

Presenting professionally to the public involves having the ability to speak plainly and clearly. Individuals that you encounter will form a lasting impression of you and your agency with the words and phrases that come out of your mouth.

**NOTE: Show slide, “Speaking Strategies.”**

##### **1. Speak plainly using clear diction and grammar.**

Officers are expected to understand and correctly utilize the English language when dealing with the populace. Succinctly verbalizing words and phrases enhances your communication skills. Avoid stuttering, if possible, and avoid using incomplete sentences.

##### **2. Check your vocal qualities:<sup>3</sup>**

- a) “Does every word and every sentence you speak sound like every other? Or do you vary the pitch and emphasis depending on the tense?”

**NOTE: Show slide, “Using Emphasis in Sentence Structure,” and conduct practical exercise #1, “Using**

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**Emphasis in Sentence Structure.”<sup>4</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

**NOTE: Show slide, “Using Variety in Sentence Structure,” and conduct practical exercise #2, “Using Variety in Sentence Structure.”<sup>5</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

- b) Do you sound tired or bored? Or energetic and interested?
- c) Is your tone tight? Nasal? Breathy?

**NOTE: Show slide, “Testing for Nasal Twang,” and conduct practical exercise #3, “Testing for Nasal Twang.”<sup>6</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

- d) Do you mumble? Or can your consonants be distinctly heard?

**NOTE: Show slide, “Do You Articulate or Mumble?” and conduct practical exercise #4, “Do You Articulate or Mumble?”<sup>7</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

- e) Do you speak so softly that people often can’t hear you?
- f) Do you have a machine-gun delivery – so rapid that people sometimes miss what you say?
- g) Do you speak so slowly that people have trouble waiting for you to finish your sentences?
- h) Do all your sentences, even declarative ones, have an upward intonation as if you are asking a question? Do you sound hesitant and unsure? Or do you sound confident in what you are saying?

The way you speak sends a message to people. Is it the message you intend to send?

- 3. Avoid using “slang” terms.

There may be times when officers use “slang” terms to build rapport with individuals on the street. But for the most part, officers should talk using proper English.

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4. Never use profanity.

Using **any** profanity (cuss words) with the citizenry is very offensive and unprofessional. It is the primary complaint that citizens make when reporting improper behavior to your supervisors or internal affairs. Regardless of the way an individual is addressing you or talking with you, do not succumb to the temptation to use their words.

5. Generally address individuals by “Sir” and “Ma’am.”

Officers should address the persons they are interviewing, citing, arresting, and giving general information to as “Sir” or “Ma’am.” If you know an individual’s last name, then it is appropriate to refer to them as “Mr. or Mrs. Jones.” Addressing them in this manner shows respect and can diffuse charged individuals.

6. Smile and nod when listening to individuals.

“Smiling and occasional nodding function as encouragers in a conversation, reassuring the other person that you are friendly, interested, *approachable*, and listening. If you usually listen impassively, try nodding occasionally. Do not overdo it. An occasional single nod of the head encourages people to say more; successive nods get them to stop.”<sup>8</sup>

7. Utilize your voice commands to project control and direct actions.

Many times an officer will have to give appropriate voice commands to direct individuals to take action. Examples:

- a) Commanding citizens to stay away from a crime scene.
- b) Commanding suspects to stay in their cars during a high risk vehicle stop.
- c) Moving individuals while you are directing traffic.
- d) Directing multiple suspects during a raid or residential search.

Being able to continuously project your voice is the key to directing others. “Breathing is what supports the voice. If your breath is shallow and irregular, your voice will be thin and weak. What is needed is an efficient and regular use of breath: not

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breathiness for the first few words and running out of breath by the end.”<sup>9</sup>

Having a rising inflection in your voice may make you sound unsure of what you are saying. This will be reflected as weak and non-commanding. When you give a verbal command to an individual, it should be direct, somewhat loud, and authoritative.

**NOTE: Show slide, “Directing Others,” and conduct practical exercise #5, “Directing Others.”<sup>10</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

### **B. Verbal/Nonverbal Communication**

**NOTE: Show slide, “Verbal/Nonverbal Communication.”**

“Messages have two parts—the words themselves and the signal we send with the words to tell people how they should take the words. When Don Corleone in ‘The Godfather’ offered someone a ‘deal they could not refuse’ he did so in a friendly and fatherly voice that also told that person that he would probably be killed if he did not comply.

Our posture, gestures, tone of voice, etc., are the signals we use to give people directions, as well as, how they should interpret our words. The same words can mean very different things in different situations when accompanied by different gestures and different pitches and tones in the voice. The words themselves cause much less trouble in communication than do the body signals which accompany the words. Words don’t mean, people mean. Meanings are in people, not in symbols.

The adage ‘actions speak louder than words’ seem to be more true now than before, at least scientifically, as researchers claim that **nonverbal cues account for about 90 percent of the meaning that is transmitted between two persons in face-to-face communications. Less than 10 percent of the meaning comes through the verbal channel.** To the extent that we can understand a person’s words and actions, we have a better chance of ‘reading’ that person correctly.

In addition to verbalized messages, an officer sends out nonverbal signals. Although officers are aware of the many dimensions of body language, few individuals understand the function of nonverbal communication. The officer who understands his own nonverbal behavior can increase the likelihood of this message being understood correctly. Likewise, officers who understand the functions of nonverbal communication will be more likely to interpret the silent message sent his way and react appropriately.”<sup>11</sup>



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### 1. Paralanguage<sup>12</sup>

**NOTE: Show slide, “Paralanguage.”**

“Paralanguage addresses qualities such a voice pitch, range, timbre, resonance, speed, and speech difficulties, such as lisping or stuttering. **While body language accounts for 55 percent of the meaning of a message, paralanguage accounts for an additional 35 percent. How we say a word or phrase can determine its meaning.**

Example: If you are asked if you like your job and you reply “yes,” the way you say it may actually communicate just the opposite.

#### a) Voice characteristics

##### (1) Pleading or questioning tone

- (a) Speaker’s voice may rise at the end of the sentence as if the statement may be a question. It may be quiet and not projected well.
- (b) Enunciation may be poor so that messages are mumbled or trail off into inaudibility.
- (c) The pitch may be high and tone breathy so that the voice lacks strength and energy.
- (d) Result is that the voice characteristics do not command attention.
- (e) **As an officer it is more vital to sound confident than to feel confident; it is important that you develop a strong self-assured tone through practice. Fear can be detected through your tone.**<sup>13</sup>

##### (2) Sarcastic, judgmental, overbearing voice tone<sup>14</sup>

- (a) Assertively phrased sentences can sound quite aggressive if delivered with an overbearing tone of voice.

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- (b) Some people are not aware of the effect that their tone of voice may reflect aggressiveness.
- (c) Another aggressive voice characteristic is the overemphasis of particular words or phrases in the sentence.
- (d) Clipped or very deliberately stated messages or messages forced out through clinched teeth may also appear aggressive.

### b) Word choices

The kind of words used is often a clear reflection of the officers's style. This is particularly true for the aggressive approach because it uses especially negative language and demanding statements.

#### (1) "Loaded" words<sup>15</sup>

- (a) Some words simply cannot be used in a neutral and objective description. Words such as **lazy, incompetent, stupid, unmotivated, and worthless** are judgmental in themselves and provoke a negative reaction. Loaded words or phrases arouse defensiveness.
- (b) The more loaded the language used to describe the problem, the more likely the other person will become defensive and stop listening.

#### (2) "You" statements<sup>16</sup>

A "you" statement is "you" followed by a loaded word or phrase.

- (a) "You" followed by a description tends to provoke more defensiveness than a statement done without a "verbal" finger pointing "you" statement.

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Example: “You need to slow down.” It is likely to be more loaded than “Your speed is too fast for this stretch of road.”

“You’re not telling me the truth” tends to provoke more defensiveness than “I need for you to be completely honest with me.”

- (b) Another problem is that such statements are often rather general.

Example: “You are a known criminal.” This gives very little information.

“I have seen your criminal history background and know all the times you’ve been charged and convicted.” This gives more information.

### (3) Judgments disguised as questions<sup>17</sup>

- (a) Another aggressive approach is to ask a question that really expresses a judgment.

Example: “What are you doing hanging out here today?” What is really meant is, “Why don’t you have a legitimate job instead of dealing drugs.”

- (b) The nonassertive person asks a question and hides his feelings. The aggressive person asks a question, but makes his real feelings obvious through word choice, voice tone, and body language.

### (4) Descriptive instead of judgmental criticism<sup>18</sup>

- (a) Assertive criticisms describe behavior that may create problems without attacking the person involved.
- (b) The purpose of assertive criticism is to solve the problem, not punish the other person for their behavior.

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- (c) It is “non-loaded” language.
- (5) Clear, direct, non-apologetic expression of expectations and feelings<sup>19</sup>
  - (a) State in the first few minutes of interaction exactly what you want so people do not have to guess what you want or listen to several minutes of hinting.

Some examples are:

- i) “Sir, I will need to see your driver’s license and registration. I clocked you traveling 70 mph in a 55 mph speed zone and will be issuing you a citation.”
- ii) “Mrs. Edwards, I understand that you are upset and frustrated, but I need for you to sit down now while I finish my investigation and report.”
- (b) Statements are direct and specific and directed to the person for whom they are meant. (Important for assigning tasks, in criticizing others, responding to criticism, giving praise, and in other interactions.)

### 2. Nonverbal communication – body language cues<sup>20</sup>

**NOTE: Show slide, “Body Language Cues.”**

#### a) Hesitation

Nonassertive speakers sound as if they are not sure of what they are saying. One thing that communicates weakness is hesitation or a lot of “ums and ahs.” The speaker who wants to sound confident plans and perhaps even practices what they are going to say so that it can come out smoothly and without undue hesitation. A strong, even flow of speech sounds much more assertive than a halting hesitant statement.

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Compare the following statements. Which sounds stronger?

- I uh, really think, uh that you should, put, uh, that knife down, uh right now.
- Put that knife down!

Assertive statements get right to the point. It's not necessary to wade through a lot of words to find out what the assertive person wants. For example, the assertive officer would more likely say, "I need to discuss your role in this conflict, and why your son keeps running away."

b) Lack of eye contact

"One of the most critical nonverbal cues is lack of eye contact. Looking at someone while talking communicates directness and self-confidence, while downcast eyes communicate uncertainty or hesitation. It is much easier for someone to ignore a message when one never has to look the speaker in the eyes. Eye contact tells the other person "I am talking particularly to you, and what I am saying is important to me."

Observe others you interact with. How do you feel when someone doesn't make eye contact with you? Notice whether you make eye contact when you interact with others, and if you do not, try making eye contact for several days and see if it makes any difference with the way others interact with you.

c) "Looking through you" eye contact

While the nonassertive person avoids eye contact, the aggressive person may stare at someone without really making eye contact. Interestingly enough, neither one really sees people's reactions to what they are saying. A person can't really observe others without genuine eye contact.

Staring at someone is certainly more powerful than not making eye contact at all, but it can be intimidating and minimize access to information about the other person's actions.

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d) Interruption

Since the aggressive person is not really interested in listening to other people's point of view, he often does not give them an opportunity to finish what they are saying. He may actually tell a person to shut up or may simply start talking before the other person has finished. Even when an aggressive person does not actually interrupt, his responses may seem to have little to do with what the other person said. He carries on 'shoot-and-reload' conversations. In a shoot-and-reload conversation, one person says his piece (shoots) and then thinks of what he is going to say next while the other person talks (reload). This style of discussion tends to cut off a great deal of potentially valuable information and the other person's position.

e) Tense, impatient posture

A person can communicate aggressiveness by standing over someone with hands on hips, pointing their finger at someone, or moving so close to someone that personal space is invaded. Aggressive posture also can involve clenching fists, tightening jaw muscles, and waving arms. When walking, the aggressive person may push past others or move so forcefully that people feel obligated to step out of the way. The aggressive person may appear tense and as though they can barely contain their impatience long enough to carry on a conversation. Attending to other work or looking around the room while others are talking communicates this unwillingness to sit and listen respectfully to someone else's view.

f) Slumping, downtrodden posture

Confidence or lack of assurance are clearly communicated before a person speaks. Nonassertive people move in a jerky, hesitant way—as if they are not sure of their direction. They may slump their shoulders, put their hands in their pockets, or hold them tightly at their sides, and look down or away. They often sit tensely on the edge of their chairs with arms crossed or slump down in the chair, shrinking away from the other person.

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- g) Words and nonverbal messages that don't match

When what is said conflicts with the nonverbal part of a message, people tend to believe the nonverbal communication. If someone says, "I'm really angry" with a big smile, people may not take their anger very seriously. Saying "this is a serious issue" and following it with a nervous laugh takes away the impact of the statement. Smiling and nodding too frequently also communicates nonassertiveness. Strong, forceful statements must be supported by consistent, forceful body language, because mixed messages reduce the speaker's impact on others.

**NOTE: Show video, *Communication Skills for LEOs - "Body Language Cues"* (7 minutes).**

**NOTE: Show video, *Communication Skills for LEOs - "Mixed Messages"* (7 minutes).**

**NOTE: Show slide, "Attitudes and Nonverbal Communications" and conduct practical exercise #6, "Attitudes and Nonverbal Communications."<sup>21</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

### 3. Other nonverbal communication points

- a) Dr. Edward T. Hall coined the term "proxemics." It is the study of personal space and comfort levels. He found four general zones, which are:<sup>22</sup>

- (1) Intimate Zone: 6 to 18 inches

**NOTE: Show slide, "Intimate Zone."**

This close phase of intimate distance is used for romantic contact, for very close friendships and for children clinging to a parent or each other.

- (2) Personal Zone: 1 ½ to 2 ½ feet

**NOTE: Show slide, "Personal Zone."**

This distance is kept for close contacts, well within handshaking range, or for distances during small, intimate cocktail parties.

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- (3) Social Zone: 4 to 12 feet

**NOTE: Show slides, “Social Zone.”**

- (a) Close phase: 4 to 7 feet

Generally the distance at which we transact impersonal business.

- (b) Far phase: 7 to 12 feet

This distance is for more formal social or business relationships.

- (4) Public Zone: 12 to 25 feet

**NOTE: Show slide, “Public Zone.”**

This distance is suited for more informal gatherings such as a teacher’s address in a roomful of students, or a boss at a conference or meeting. Politicians usually stay this far away for security reasons.

When these zones are “invaded” unexpectedly or by strangers, people will react to defend their own space. Citizens and suspects will react and so will officers. For *safety reasons*, officers should not let individuals they encounter invade their personal zone or intimate zone.

**NOTE: Show video, *Communication Skills for LEOs - “Proxemics”* (7 minutes).**

- b) Open vs. closed body positions<sup>23</sup>

**NOTE: Show slide, “Open vs. Closed Body Positions.”**

**NOTE: Explain that every movement should not be interpreted rigidly.**

- (1) Open body positions often signal a listener’s understanding of a topic.

- (a) Steeped fingers – confidence



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**NOTE: Show slide, “Steepled Fingers.”**

- (b) Open hands/arms – acceptance

**NOTE: Show slide, “Open Hands.”**

- (c) Calm facial features – understanding
- (d) Leaning forward – signal of interest

**NOTE: Show slide, “Leaning Forward.”**

- (2) Closed positions include:

- (a) Staring – Dominance, aggressiveness

**NOTE: Show slide, “Staring.”**

- (b) Crossed arms/clenched hands – indifference

**NOTE: Show slide, “Crossed Arms.”**

- (c) Confused/questioning facial expressions – misunderstanding

- 4. Utilizing body language techniques to de-escalate an emotionally charged situation<sup>24</sup>

A person’s body language may escalate or diminish emotionally charged situations in various ways.

- a) A law enforcement officer can often “read” a person’s body language which may signal pre-attack stress or aggression.

**NOTE: Show slide, “Hostile Cues.”**

- (1) Smile with dead eyes
- (2) Posture and rigidity
- (3) Defiant eyes and verbiage
- (4) Tight jaws
- (5) Ignores officer’s presence

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- (6) Will not relinquish control
- (7) Will not communicate
- (8) Clinched fists
- (9) Shallow breathing
- (10) Shaking/tremors and nervous twitches
- (11) Alcohol/drug use<sup>25</sup>

Being with an individual that possesses one or two listed traits is not necessarily hazardous, but if this same individual has three or more of the above traits, it is a definite indicator of danger.

- b) A citizen can “read” an officer’s body language as well. The nonverbal message must match the verbal message being sent. Any mismatch can be interpreted as weakness or indecision.
- c) Volatile situations can be agitated or calmed by an officer’s body language. If an officer is projecting calm in an emotionally charged situation, they may have a calming effect on that situation. Conversely, an agitated officer could reinforce or enhance that charged state.
- d) The concept of matching and *mirroring* body language is based on the belief that people like people who they perceive to be like them. We can build rapport and trust through subtly matching a person’s body positioning, posture, tone of voice, and speed/rate of speech.
- e) A law enforcement officer must overcome a person’s emotional blocks to aid in resolving a situation. Using paraphrasing, other active listening skills, body language, and mirroring, an officer may remove emotions from a charged situation, thus enabling the officer to better resolve the basic problem(s).

- 5. Understanding the difference between nonassertive, assertive and aggressive behaviors<sup>26</sup>

## ***Communication Skills for Law Enforcement Officers***

Officers will encounter a variety of situations and people in their daily activities. Most people will display one of the following basic types of behavior. You, too, will fluctuate between all three categories, depending upon who you are communicating with.

**NOTE: Show video, *Communication Skills for LEOs* – “Hostile Cues” (5 minutes).**

- a) Definitions

**NOTE: Show slide, “Behavior Styles.”**

- (1) “*NONASSERTIVE* behavior is passive and indirect. It communicates a message of inferiority. By being nonassertive, we allow the wants, needs, and rights of others to be more important than our own. Nonassertive behavior helps create ‘win-lose’ situations. A person behaving nonassertively will lose while allowing others to win (or at best be disregarded). Following this road leads to being a victim, not a winner.
- (2) *AGGRESSIVE* behavior is more complex. It can be either active or passive. Aggression can be direct or indirect, honest or dishonest—but it always communicates an impression of superiority and disrespect. By being aggressive we put our wants, needs, and rights above those of others. We attempt to get our way by not allowing others a choice. Aggressive behavior is usually inappropriate because it violates the rights of others. People behaving aggressively may “win” by making sure others “lose”—but in doing so, set themselves up for retaliation. No one likes a bully.
- (3) *ASSERTIVE* behavior is active, direct, and honest. It communicates an impression of self-respect and respect for others. By being assertive we view our wants, needs, and rights as equal with those of others. We work toward ‘win-win’ outcomes. An assertive person wins by influencing, listening, and negotiating so that others choose to cooperate willingly. This behavior leads to success without retaliation and encourages honest, open relationships.”

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- b) It's important to be able to recognize the differences between the terms both verbally and nonverbally.

**NOTE: Show slide, "Which Is Which?" and conduct practical exercise #7, "Which Is Which?"<sup>27</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

**NOTE: Show slide, "Nonassertive, Assertive, or Aggressive?" and conduct practical exercise #8, "Nonassertive, Assertive or Aggressive?"<sup>28</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

### C. Active Listening

**NOTE: Show slide, "Active Listening."**

#### 1. The importance of active listening

As law enforcement officers, we possess a variety of tools which allow us to perform our job more effectively. Some of these tools are handguns, impact weapons, chemical dispersal agents, hand-held communication devices, and computer technology. The least used tool, which every law enforcement officer possesses, is our ability to listen. Listening to citizens, suspects, and other officers is at the heart of law enforcement. We constantly deal with a diverse range of people and their problems.

Officers need to remember that communication is the *shared* meaning between two or more individuals, and that *active* communication is a two way street. Trying to listen, studies have shown, takes up 40% to 70% of a person's day. The same studies have shown that we listen with 25% to 50% accuracy. We also forget 33% to 50% of what we hear within eight hours. Why? It is due to our inability to *actively listen*.

**Active listening** is trying to understand what the other person is saying, from their point of view. This is listening with empathy. Empathy is very different from sympathy. Sympathy, many times, means to agree with another person's point of view. Empathy is simply understanding that view. Empathy = placing yourself in their shoes.

We don't always listen as well as we think we do. The average human is able to speak at a rate of 125 words per minute, but we

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are able to process 500 to 600 words per minute. This “down time” causes us to listen less intently or to daydream.

Why is active listening so important? It helps us to clarify the other person’s needs. It prevents misinformation. It helps a law enforcement officer to determine a correct course of action.

### 2. Four levels of discriminate listening<sup>29</sup>

**NOTE: Show slide, “Discriminate Listening.”**

#### a) Attentive listening

The purpose of attentive listening is to receive the speaker’s message. This is the most superficial of listening, but it precedes deeper listening.

#### b) Retentive listening

This type of listening involves an attempt to comprehend and remember the speaker’s message. The officer may wish to take notes as well as rely on memory for parts of the speaker’s message.

#### c) Reflective listening

During reflective listening, the officer not only engages in attentive and retentive listening, but also evaluates the information, draws relationships, and makes inferences.

#### d) Reactive listening

In this final level, the officer employs reflective listening but at the same time formulates questions based on the message they receive. **Reactive listening is the level at which full communication takes place, and the officer responds to the speaker.**

Officers must listen critically throughout these four levels. They must analyze the ideas and motives of the speaker and make critical judgments about the quality and accuracy of what they are being told. Listening critically involves the ability to distinguish between fact and opinion and between emotional and logical statements, as well as detecting bias, and to recognize self-serving statements.

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### 3. What we achieve by listening<sup>30</sup>

Active listening brings about changes in people's attitudes towards themselves and others.

If you, in your role as an officer, begin actively listening to individuals, they, in turn, will listen more to others, becoming less defensive and argumentative.

*Listening builds positive relationships among people and provides more information to the listener.*

How to listen

a) One's self-perception greatly influences their actions. If you want to help an individual reduce defensiveness to you and the system and become more adaptive, you must try to remove the threat of yourself as someone who is trying to change the individual. Really listening to someone means initially accepting them for who and what they are. **YOU MUST CREATE A CLIMATE WHICH IS NEITHER CRITICAL, VALUATIVE, NOR MORALIZING.**

b) What to avoid

Rid yourself of the need to influence and direct others to your way of doing things. More change can be achieved by not passing immediate judgment or pushing people to solve problems the way that you would.

c) What to do

Active listening is trying to grasp what the speaker is saying from their point of view.

(1) Listen for the total meaning.

Any message a person tries to get across usually has two components:

(a) The content of the message

(b) The feeling or attitude underlying the content

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Both are important.

- (2) Respond appropriately to their feelings by showing concern and empathy.

- d) Note all cues

As previously written, not all communication is verbal. A good listener will notice the person's facial expression, body posture, hand movements, eye movements, breathing, and speech. All of these help convey the total message.

### 4. Nonverbal communication in listening

There are many skills that can be used when listening to others. As you have learned, your nonverbal behavior tells other people a great deal about your willingness to communicate with them. There are five key behaviors that will communicate to others that you are open to hearing what they have to say and that you are listening to them. A way of remembering these key behaviors is to think of **SPEAR**.

**NOTE: Show slide, "SPEAR."**

**S** – Remember your **STANCE** when talking to another person. This means that your shoulders should be turned slightly away from the other person. Keep your weapon side away from the individual, especially when closing the gap and moving into their body space.

**NOTE: Instructor should demonstrate this interview stance.**

**P** – Have an open **POSTURE**. This means that your arms are not crossed in front of you, and that if you are sitting that your legs are not crossed. You are standing in front of the other person in the "ready" position. Hands are used to gesture or are comfortably by your side.

**NOTE: Instructor should demonstrate.**

**E** – Have good **EYE Contact**. Good eye contact is the key to effective communications. You should look directly at the person when the other person is speaking and when you are responding.

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**A – ATTENDING behavior.** Weight is on the front portion or balls of feet.

**R – Relax!** Be yourself. As you learn this skill, it may be difficult to relax because you are concentrating on new behaviors, but with practice and repetition, it will become easier. It is important that you be yourself and relax in your encounters with other people. Interacting with citizens in a relaxed, calm manner will eventually elicit a like response in the other person.

**NOTE: Show slide, “SPEAR,” and conduct practical exercise # 9, “SPEAR.”**

### 5. Barriers to active listening<sup>31</sup>

**NOTE: Show slide, “Barriers to Active Listening.”**

- a) Being preoccupied with talking not listening
- b) Predicting what the speaker will say
- c) Formulating responses prematurely
- d) Using ambiguous words
- e) Assigning the wrong meaning to words – misinterpreting slang
- f) Avoiding uninteresting material
- g) Distorting messages due to bias – stereotyping and attitudes
- h) Oversimplifying answers or explanations
- i) Yielding to external distractions – noises, other people, etc.
- j) Yielding to internal distractions – personal problems, own stress level, officer’s values or morals
- k) Rationalizing poor listening – having thoughts like this:  
“That guy can’t even speak right, how can I listen to him?”
- l) Distrust (between officers and individuals)

### 6. Practices to improve active listening skills<sup>32</sup>



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- a) Stop talking – listen more than you speak
- b) Resist distractions – noise, personal views, other people, etc.
- c) Be physically and mentally prepared to listen
- d) Withhold judgment – wait for the full message
- e) Listen with empathy – understand their point of view and their feelings
- f) Listen and look for what is not being said
- g) Ask questions, search for additional information, and clarify misunderstandings

### **7. Paraphrasing**

Another powerful communications tool a police officer can possess is the ability to paraphrase. Paraphrasing is simply described as a technique which allows the listener to summarize the content of what the speaker says in order to clarify the true meaning of the speaker's message. Why is this technique so powerful? There are two reasons. First, everyone has the desire to be listened to. It matters not whether the person is holding a normal conversation or is under stress; everyone who speaks wants their message listened to and understood. Second, by actively demonstrating to the other person that you have listened and are seeking clarification of their message you place yourself in a position to establish a degree of trust with that person. Developing a level of trust with the other person is critical. A person is much more likely to truly share their feelings and talk freely with persons they trust.

Paraphrasing is a dynamic communications technique and when used appropriately can calm an angry person by expediting the discovery of the true issues at hand in an encounter. Paraphrasing is nonthreatening and nonjudgmental and therefore should not intimidate the other person.

Paraphrasing is best used at the beginning of a conversation and can assist you in quickly determining what the true meaning of the other person's message is. Paraphrasing can calm an angry person or persons who furiously talk without allowing a word in

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edgewise. Paraphrasing offers a method to place an invisible “comma” into the conversation and redirect the person by focusing on exactly what their position is. This technique works well when you face the possibility of losing information that may be important to understand prior to moving onto other issues. Paraphrasing is also helpful when you find yourself becoming agitated with the situation. By causing the other person to clarify their position, the frustration and confusion is minimized. It should be noted, paraphrasing should not be utilized continuously throughout a conversation. People will be quick to note the similarity of your questions and may become provoked.

Paraphrasing is a four step process. Each step is described in detail below:

**NOTE: Show slide, “Paraphrasing Steps.”**

a) Listen

This step is the most critical. You should listen to the other person with the understanding that you are going to summarize everything you think the person said. Listening is hard work because we usually pick up sound bits from the other person and immediately begin to formulate our response while the other person is still talking. This leads to misinformation due to the fact that we have not comprehended the other person’s total message.

b) Speculative statements

To initiate paraphrasing you must inform the person that you wish to summarize what you thought you heard them say. Do this by interjecting a speculative statement like “If I understood you correctly you stated . . .” or “Let me make sure I got that, I heard you say . . .” or any other phrase that indicates to the person you are trying to understand what they have said so far. It is imperative that the initiating phrase remains speculative. You never want to initiate paraphrasing by saying words like “What you said was . . .” or “You just said . . .” The person may not have said or may not have meant what your interpretation is. By making rigid initial statements you set yourself up for the other person to reply “No, that’s not what I said” or “You are not listening.” You risk breaking rapport.

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### c) Summarize

The body of the technique involves your ability to briefly summarize what you thought you heard the other person say. Typically, there are three areas you can summarize. These are content, feelings, and any other inferences made by the speaker. Remember, you are *summarizing* during this phase, not repeating back verbatim what the person says. People do not like to be mimicked and you risk upsetting the person by repeating exactly what was just said. Highlighting the various parts of the speaker's dialog will suffice here. If there are any emotions attached it is usually advisable to comment about them. Happiness, anger, frustration, or concern may have profound meaning to the speaker. Acknowledging these emotions indicates to the other person that you have perceived them. Before you can deal with a person's problem, you must first deal with the emotional aspect of the event.

### d) Follow-up questions

To conclude paraphrasing you must allow an opportunity for the other person to reply and correct any misunderstood information. This is best accomplished by simply asking the person something to the effect "Did I get it?" or "Am I on target?"

### Sample paraphrasing conversation

Speaker: Well officer, I was standing at the corner of First and Maple Street the night of the car crash and it was real windy out that night. I think it may have been raining or sprinkling—I'm not sure. Anyway, I was on my way down to the store on the other corner of First Street when all of a sudden I heard this awful screeching sound. It sounded like tires so I turned around to see what direction it was coming from. I got really scared because by the way the sound was I thought that I may be the one that was going to be hit! My heart started pounding and it felt like my heart was going to come right out of my chest. When I turned around I was looking down First Street and I saw this white Ford pick-up truck flying south down First Street. I noticed the traffic light in the truck's direction was red. Anyway, the

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truck skidded through the intersection and hit this red sports car that was going west down Maple Street. Hit him right in the side, spun around, and kept going—he did!

Officer: Excuse me sir, this information is very important. Let me see if I understood you correctly. What I heard you say was you were standing at the corner of First Street and Maple Street walking down First Street when you heard the sound of skidding tires. I understand the sound really frightened you! I believe you said the skidding tires were from a white Ford truck that was traveling south on Maple and the truck ran the red light in his direction of travel and struck a red sports car going west on First Street. By what I heard you say the truck hit the car on the left side, spun around, and left the scene. Have I got the correct information so far?

Speaker: Well kinda. What I meant to say was after the truck hit the car it was the car that spun around and left the scene not the truck. That truck stayed right there. I can't believe the truck ran the red light and stayed on the scene. Wonder why that car left? Man, just thinking about it makes my heart start pounding!

**NOTE: Show slide, “Proper Paraphrasing” and conduct practical exercise #10, “Proper Paraphrasing.” (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

### **D. Cultural Awareness**

**NOTE: Show slide, “Cultural Awareness.”**

The make-up of the American population is constantly changing. We must acknowledge each individual, group, and culture for its role in American society. As law enforcement officers, we must strive to recognize people's differences and to instill a feeling of mutual respect and sensitivity to these differences.<sup>33</sup>

1. Reasons to become more culturally competent and tolerant
  - a) “Enhances officer safety by cross cultural interpretation of potentially dangerous people/situations

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- b) Improves law enforcement effectiveness
- c) Improves community's image of law enforcement – 'Community-policing model'
- d) Reduces external and internal stress
- e) Uses words to persuade culturally diverse people
- f) Reduces hostility and the need to use physical force options<sup>34</sup>
- g) Reduces liability

### 2. Cultural variations in personal communication

**NOTE: Show slide, "Recognizing Your Own Stereotypes," and conduct practical exercise #11, "Recognizing Your Own Stereotypes."<sup>35</sup> (Refer to Instructor Notes)**

Effective communication requires a shared base of experiences and a common set of rules about the meaning of not just words, but intonation patterns, word order, volume, pauses, facial expressions, gestures, and other nonverbal considerations. Internationals who learn English words may still be operating according to the nonverbal rules of their native languages and cultures. These nonverbal rules often lead to misunderstandings and confusion.<sup>36</sup>

#### a) Degree of directness

Even the purpose of communication is culturally defined. Americans and Northern Europeans see communication as a means of getting information across and accomplishing tasks. Much of the rest of the world sees it as a means of building relationships.

- (1) In the Middle East, business is not transacted until a cup of tea is served and there is a period of inconsequential conversation.
- (2) American's "let's get to the point" approach may be seen as rude, cold and offensive to Latin-American or Mid-Eastern individuals.

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b) Appropriate subject matter

Some subjects are considered inappropriate and are not to be shared.

- (1) Asians regard feelings as too private to share.
- (2) Latinos generally appreciate inquiries about family members, while Arabs and Asians find this topic far too personal.

c) Facial expressions and eye contact

These behaviors are learned at an early age and are generally unconscious. This makes them major stumbling blocks in the communication process.

- (1) Anglo-Americans typically look away while speaking but make eye contact when listening. African-Americans do just the opposite. The impression can be that the African-American is not paying attention while listening and/or challenging when talking.
- (2) The Japanese regard direct eye contact as a sign of disrespect.
- (3) As law enforcement officers, what does a lack of eye contact mean?

d) Silence

- (1) The American culture generally views silence as something to be avoided. The discomfort of silence usually causes someone to jump in and start talking.
- (2) In Japanese culture, silence is considered an important part of communication, a chance for serious consideration of what has been said and a gesture of respect for the speaker. Americans' habit of finishing a person's sentence is considered rude and even arrogant by the Japanese.

e) Touch

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One of the most powerful nonverbal signals is touch, and one of the most dangerous.

- (1) Devout Muslim and Orthodox Jewish men never touch a woman outside of their families, even to shake hands.
- (2) A soft, warm handshake is seen as welcoming and friendly in Mexican culture, but might be seen as weak and “wimpy” by American standards.
- (3) A Korean store owner, feeling it rude to touch anyone they don’t know, placed an African-American’s change on the counter. The customer, on the other hand, expected to have his change placed in his hand. The customer was offended at what he perceived as the Korean’s repulsion at touching him and attacked the store owner.
- (4) Patting the head of a Cambodian or Buddhist can be seen as degrading to that person, regardless if that person is a child or adult.

### **f) Volume of speech**

- (1) In American culture, you should not talk too loudly or too softly, depending on the situation.
- (2) Asian culture feels that to speak or laugh loudly is rude and disruptive.

### **g) Gestures**

This is second only to touch as the area that can offend others the most.

- (1) Pointing is best avoided. Asians point with entire hand, people from Hong Kong point with the middle finger, Malaysians point with the thumb.
- (2) Beckoning motions which are commonly used by Americans can mean “stay away” to some Asian cultures.

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- (3) Signs of approval, “ok,” “thumbs up,” and “V” can be some of the most offensive to other cultures, depicting strong sexual connotations.
  - h) Even when individuals learn English, many of their native-language rules will stay with them, influencing both how they send and receive messages.
- 3. Key principles when dealing with people from other cultures<sup>37</sup>

Although there are over 102 different cultures in the United States (this does not account for differences due to age, sex, socioeconomic status, etc.), there are some key principles that can be related to all different people.

**NOTE: Show slide, “Other Cultures.”**

- a) Become thoroughly familiar with the different cultures present in your jurisdiction.
- b) Treat all people with respect.
  - (1) Definition of respect: To feel or show honor or esteem for, or to hold in high regard.
  - (2) This is different for different people
    - (a) Vietnamese
      - i) ‘Losing face’ – Important not to lose face or allow others to lose face
      - ii) Will quickly get out of car to show respect to officer during traffic stop
      - iii) Lack of eye contact is a sign of respect for authority
      - iv) Must use indirect communication
      - v) Will show little sign of emotion and embarrassed by signs of emotion
    - (b) Latino



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- i) Machismo – different than how viewed
  - ii) Man is responsible for his family
  - iii) Dignity is important
  - iv) Chivalrous, protect women
  - v) Usually treat with respect, get respect
- (c) African American
  - i) Importance of ‘saving face’ especially in front of peers
  - ii) Importance of addressing formally with Mr. and Ms., sir, ma’am
- (d) European American
  - i) Generally a non-contact culture that prefers a greater distance of physical closeness
  - ii) Generally more confident in its communication and interaction with law enforcement officers
- (e) Japanese
  - i) Very conscious of losing face – consider interviewing privately
  - ii) Hold officers in high esteem
- (f) East Indian
  - i) Treat all with respect and honor – formal greeting
  - ii) Hindu and Sikhs – mutual tolerance, all approaches to God are equal

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c) Be patient.

- (1) Especially with language barrier – may have to translate into own language before speaking or provide an interpreter
- (2) Individuals may have a great deal of hesitancy to express a problem to a police officer

(a) Japanese

Once rapport and trust is developed, officer may be considered “counselor” and approached for solutions to problems. The officer must become a patient listener.

(b) Korea

May have to repeat questions and clarify answers to ensure getting correct answer.

d) Use tactical communication.

- (1) Being street savvy is having the ability to become who you have to be to effectively handle the call—adapt, adapt, adapt!
- (2) Not enough anymore to be competent or right under pressure; officers must look and sound professional
- (3) Don’t say “calm down!” – do it
- (4) Deflecting verbal abuse

(a) “Say what you want, DO what I say.”<sup>38</sup>

The only actual power a person has is the power of verbal protest.

Must understand violators will use verbal challenge to challenge power.

(b) “I’ve got the last ACT; you’ve got the last WORD.”<sup>39</sup>

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- (c) “Know your own weaknesses”<sup>40</sup> and what pushes your buttons so that you don’t get caught up in the verbal confrontation.
- (d) Get rid of your personal face.<sup>41</sup>
  - i) Know the person you are facing only sees your uniform
  - ii) Become an officer representing your department, our state laws, our Constitution, etc.<sup>42</sup>
  - iii) Forget your own ego<sup>43</sup>
- e) Remember the importance of the family.
  - (1) In many cultures, the father is the head of the family.
    - (a) Important to address him or elder
    - (b) If in a domestic situation, when the woman is questioned, be aware of the additional discomfort all family members will feel. Make sure you explain to the father what you are doing.
    - (c) Many cultures attempt to handle problems within the family so they will not want police involvement.
    - (d) If at all possible, do not ask a child to translate, especially in Asian cultures.
  - (2) In many cultures, the family support system is extended.
    - (a) Native Americans – Aunts and uncles are often the disciplinarians
    - (b) Great respect for elders
      - i) In India, elders held in great esteem

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- ii) In China, elders and dead family members respected
  - (c) In India, men avoid touching women; they consider it sexual molestation. If officers must touch, be sure to explain.
- f) Strong connections with the past and/or religion

Religion is especially important with first generation individuals, but often later generations attempt to hold on to their culture's traditions and beliefs. Individuals may appear "assimilated" externally, but hold their culture internally and privately.

  - (1) African American – links to Africa and slavery
  - (2) Latino
    - (a) Strong religious ties
    - (b) Contact with parish priest may be useful in sensitive situations
  - (3) Native American
    - (a) Use of peyote and other "drugs"
    - (b) Medicine or elder may be useful in specific situations, e.g., Navaho reservation illness/death
- g) Understand their unique vocabulary and communication, but do not use it.
- h) Know general information about specific groups (especially taboos, but do not assume all general characteristics will fit a specific individual).
- i) Be aware of fear/mistrust of authority.

You may not know about their history with other law enforcement in our country or their own.

### 4. Officer survival and safety<sup>44</sup>

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As the population of our region grows, so does its diversity. With this growth comes the increased opportunity for confusion between cultures and the chance of increased animosity and violence.

a) Cross-cultural “reading”

This is the ability to interpret possible danger signs or prevent the misinterpretation of signs and is vital to the survival of officers and the safety of civilians.

Asian-Americans are very indirect in their use of eye contact. During an encounter an officer could misread this and see a possible attack or that person is being disrespectful.

b) The use of certain words or the presence of an officer can offend some people.

An officer is sent on a disturbance call to a Latino-American or Hispanic home. The telecommunicator advised that a female called. When the officer arrives, a male answers the door, and the officer sees a female crying behind him. Based on current trends, you would try to talk to the female first. Doing so would insult and offend the male/head of household. This action could escalate the situation.

c) Citizen complaints

Misunderstandings can cause unjustified complaints based on the way the officer interacted with people.

- (1) When stopped or approached by an officer, most Asian-Americans will walk directly to the officer. To the officer, this can be construed as a threat.
- (2) While investigating possible child abuse, an officer observes moderate scratches up and down a Laotian child’s back. A social worker removes the child from the home. The next morning the officer finds that the father has committed suicide. The scratches are from rubbing a silver coin on the child to cure him. The removal of the child caused the father to

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“lose face.” This is one of the highest forms of disrespect for many Southeast Asians.

### III. Conclusion

#### A. Summary

During this block of instruction we have practiced reciting sentences using correct diction and grammar, and learned the importance of effective voice commands to direct and persuade individuals to respond. We discussed in-depth body language signals and ways to communicate nonverbally. We learned how to “actively listen” and the value of being able to “tune-in” when an individual is talking. We also listed principles that will aid in the effective communication when dealing with individuals who have culturally different backgrounds.

**NOTE: Show slides, “Training Objectives.”**

#### B. Questions from Class

**NOTE: Show slide, “Questions.”**

#### C. Closing Statement

Being able to effectively communicate with a variety of individuals is the cornerstone, the foundation for your success as a law enforcement officer. You must attempt to make every contact you have with your fellow officers and the citizenry a positive contact. This isn’t always possible, especially during a tense or dangerous situation; but you need to be aware of how you project and how others will “read” your movements and gestures, and then you will need to be able to defend any actions you take. Think about it . . . How do you want them to remember you?

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Georgia Cloutier, “Verbal Intervention Techniques.” *Non-Lethal Use of Force Manual* (Salemberg, NC: North Carolina Justice Academy, 1996), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Catherine Ross and Patricia Dewdney, *Communicating Professionally* (New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 1989), 26.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Georgia Cloutier, “Communication Process,” *The Direct Supervision Manual* (Salemberg, NC: North Carolina Justice Academy, 1996), 5-6.

<sup>12</sup> Cloutier, “Verbal Intervention Techniques,” 8-12.

<sup>13</sup> Susanne S. Drury, *Assertive Supervision: Building Involved Teamwork* (Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1984), 32.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 55-56.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>21</sup> James J. Floyd, *Listening: A Practical Approach* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1985), 72.

<sup>22</sup> Julius Fast, *Body Language* (New York: M. Evans and Company, Inc., 1970), 30-37.

<sup>23</sup> Gerald Nierenberg and Henry Calero, *How to Read a Person Like a Book* (New York: Pocket Books, 1971), 43-120.

<sup>24</sup> Allan Pease, *Signals* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), 169.

<sup>25</sup> “When Looks Kill: Profiling the Domestic Assaulter.” Video: AIMS Media, 1992.

<sup>26</sup> Sam Lloyd, *Developing Positive Assertiveness* (USA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 1988), 5-7, 37-38.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 37-38.

<sup>29</sup> Cloutier, “Communication Process,” 16.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>31</sup> Floyd, p. 24.

<sup>32</sup> Brian Decker, *Effective Communication, The Cornerstone of Trust* (Charlotte, NC: Charlotte/Mecklenburg Police Department, 1995), 13.

<sup>33</sup> Decker, “Managing Diversity,” 8-11.

<sup>34</sup> Vivian Lord, *Dealing Effectively with Different People: Instructor’s Manual* (Salemberg, NC: North Carolina Justice Academy, 1994), 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>36</sup> Brian Decker, *Managing Diversity: An Introduction to Cross-Cultural Communication* (Charlotte, NC: Charlotte/Mecklenburg Police Department, 1996), 7.

<sup>37</sup> Lord, 19-28.

<sup>38</sup> Dr. George Thompson, *Tactical Communications Basic Course* (Auburn, NY: Verbal Judo Institute, Inc., 2009), 4.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.



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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Decker, 4-6.